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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OTTAWA 002891

SIPDIS

FOR R, P, AND WHA

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [KPAO](#) [PHUM](#) [CA](#)

SUBJECT: COMBATING EXTREMISM IN CANADA

REF: STATE 155954

Classified By: POL M/C BRIAN FLORA. REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) HOST GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO MINIMIZE EXTREMISM

-- Canada seeks to minimize extremism among its immigrant population through a stated policy commitment to building an inclusive society that is tolerant of religious, ethnic, racial and cultural diversity. In 1971, Canada became the first country in the world to adopt an official policy of "multiculturalism." The 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms enshrines the legislative foundation for diversity. In 1988, Canada was the first nation to proclaim a "multiculturalism act," whose goal was to set a unique model for shared citizenship. The Department of Canadian Heritage, founded in 1995 and administered by the Minister of State for Multiculturalism, is responsible for national policies and programs that promote Canadian content, foster cultural participation, active citizenship and participation in Canada's civic life, and strengthen connections among Canadians. Six different days or months are designated by the federal government as occasions to highlight and promote cultural diversity.

-- The Government views immigration as a solution to impending demographic challenges. In his September 20, 2005 speech to senior public servants, Prime Minister Paul Martin called for more engaged recruitment of immigrants "who meet Canada's evolving needs - needs that are identified with provinces, communities and those in labor, business and academia," dovetailing with Canada's model of "inclusion, not assimilation; pluralism, not homogeneity; valuing diversity, not simply tolerating it (rejecting racism and hate); and peaceful resolution of conflict, not confrontation." Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has met planned immigration targets of between 200,000 to 245,000 new immigrants per year for the past four years.

12. (SBU) EXAMPLES OF RECENT USG ACTIVITIES TO COUNTER EXTREMISM IN CANADA

-- Mission Canada regularly monitors national and local press; major incidents of hate speech and incitement are generally reported in the media. Because such incidents are rare, USG response is handled on a case-by-case basis, coordinated as necessary with Embassy Ottawa and the desk.

-- Canada's political commitment to multiculturalism and a tolerant society is strong. While there has been no need for targeted USG programs to combat extremism in Canada, occasional USG funding may be obtained for special events. In May 2003, for example, WHA/PD provided \$11,000 to help cover transportation costs of U.S. speakers at the American Council for the Study of Islamic Societies 20th Annual Conference held at the University of Victoria, British Columbia. Similarly, Mission Canada personnel continue to seize opportunities to encourage tolerance and non-violence through speaking engagements and representation at non-government events.

-- Building on initial meetings earlier in the year, for example, in June 2005 ConGen Montreal staff met with ten representatives of various Muslim organizations and constituencies in Montreal to continue informal discussion and exchanges of views on a range of topics. Participant organizations included the Algerian Cultural Center, the Islamic Community Center, the Future Movement Canada, the Egyptian Student Association and an Iraqi ex-patriot group.

-- In another instance, on July 21, 2005, following the London subway bombings, ConGen Toronto staff represented the U.S. at a press conference organized by the Canadian Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR-CAN) where some 120 Imams from across Canada issued a statement condemning extremism and encouraging Canadians to confront terrorism.

13. (C) SAMPLER OF ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN COUNTERING EXTREMISM

-- The Asper Foundation, which is in the vanguard of plans to build a Canadian Museum of Human Rights in Winnipeg, annually gathers 350 students from 30 communities to discuss the Holocaust and human rights with added emphasis on American

history and the civil rights movement. The Foundation plans to extend the program to more than 1,000 students annually in the next few years.

-- Since October 2004, the Canadian Jewish Congress has organized inter-faith and multi-ethnic conferences in Ottawa, Vancouver, and Halifax, to explore ways of encouraging freedom of expression while remaining consistent with Canadian values.

-- Individuals involved in promoting tolerance and who have broad influence among Muslim youth include Dr. Jamal Badawi, Imam of the Muslim community in the Halifax region and Dr. M.A. Salah, Principal of Halifax's Maritime Muslim Academy, the only Islamic school in Atlantic Canada with 120 students in preschool to Grade 12.

-- In the four provinces of Atlantic Canada (New Brunswick, Newfoundland-Labrador, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia), the local NGO, Peaceful Schools International, has various programs to promote tolerance locally, nationally and internationally.

-- The province of New Brunswick has developed a website, <http://www.gnb.ca/hrc-cdp/e/sayno.htm>, that defines racism and provides guidance on how to counter it.

-- According to ConGen Vancouver sources, programs to counter extremism among the local Muslim population are in the process of being established in the Vancouver area. Aziz Khaki, affiliated with the British Columbia Muslim Federation, the Vancouver Pacific Interfaith Citizenship Association, and the Committee for Racial Justice, is organizing a series of workshops under a new program called "Better Race Relations" to promote better relations between Muslims and those of other faiths. The Muslim Student Association (MSA) at Simon Fraser University has community outreach programs and is working to establish a non-violence program.

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